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Sen. Laura Toy's committee approves legislation making English state's official language

LANSING – The Michigan Senate Committee on Local, Urban, and State Affairs approved legislation Thursday that would designate English as the state's official language, said state Sen. Laura M. Toy, 6th District.

"This is a common-sense measure," said Sen. Toy, chair of the committee. "English is and should formally be the one common and official language of Michigan."

Twenty-seven other states have adopted laws designating English as their official language. A number of other states are currently considering similar legislation.

According to March 2006 poll, 82 percent of Michigan residents support designating English as the state's official language and 75 percent strongly support this designation.

"This legislation would not prohibit state agencies from providing information to residents in other languages, yet it does clearly establish English as the state's official and primary language," Sen. Toy said.

According to 2004 census figures, more than 91 percent of Michigan's population older than age 5 speaks English as their primary language in the home.

The legislation, House Bill 5633, must now be approved by the full Senate before making its way to the governor.

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